

Message Text

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ORIGIN EUR-12

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 OIC-02 IO-10 SS-15 NSC-05 CIAE-00 PM-03

INR-07 L-02 ACDA-05 NSAE-00 PA-01 PRS-01 SP-02

USIA-06 TRSE-00 SAJ-01 /073 R

DRAFTED BY OASD/ISA:CVMCLAUGHLIN:MEM

APPROVED BY EUR/R&M:GBHELMAN

OASD/ISA:MG MCAULIFFE

PM/ISP:JGRAHAM

EUR/RPM:COL.RTHOMPSON/GHELMAN

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R 182337Z APR 75

FM SECSTATE WASHDC

TO USMISSION NATO

INFO USNMR SHAPE

USLOSACLANT

USDELMC

CINCLANT

USCINCEUR

C O N F I D E N T I A L STATE 089951

E.O. 11652:GDS

TAGS:MPOL, NATO

SUBJECT:SPRING DPC MINISTERIAL MEETING

1. WE WOULD APPRECIATE RECEIVING MISSION THOUGHTS ON THE WAY WE SEE DPC AGENDA SHAPING UP FOR DEFENSE MINISTERS MEETING IN MAY. AT PRESENT IT APPEARS TO US GENERALLY AS OUTLINED BELOW.

2. THE DECEMBER 1974 DPC MEETING WAS NOTABLE FOR ITS EMPHASIS ON THE INDIVISIBILITY OF THE NATO TRIAD AND ON THE NEED TO MAINTAIN AND IMPROVE CONVENTIONAL FORCES. THE MAY 1975 MEETING, WHICH IN SOME RESPECTS CAN BE CONSIDERED CONFIDENTIAL

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A DEFENSE PRELUDE TO A LATER SUMMIT MEETING, WILL BE SET

AGAINST A BACKGROUND OF STILL UNSETTLED, ALTHOUGH IMPROVING, ECONOMIC PROSPECTS, RECENTLY DECIDED UK FORCE REDUCTIONS, ONGOING CANADIAN AND ITALIAN DEFENSE REVIEWS, THE AMBIGUOUS GREEK/NATO RELATIONSHIP, TURKISH DISILLUSIONMENT, AND UNCERTAINTY AS TO FUTURE PORTUGUESE ORIENTATION. WHILE SENSITIVE SUBSTANTIVE QUESTIONS CAN BE DISCUSSED IN BILATERALS, WE WILL ALSO NEED TO COUNT ON LUNS GOOD JUDGMENT FOR MANAGEMENT OF DISCUSSION OF POLITICALLY SENSITIVE MATTERS IN THE OPEN MINISTERIAL FORUM.

3. OUR PRIMARY DEFENSE OBJECTIVE AT THE SPRING MEETING IS

TO MAINTAIN THE MOMENTUM OF OUR EXISTING INITIATIVES IN THE ALLIANCE WHILE STRENGTHENING NATO COHESION. WITH REGARD TO MINISTERIAL GUIDANCE, OUR OBJECTIVE AT THE MEETING IS TO CONTINUE TO EMPHASIZE ITS POTENTIAL AS A CENTRAL THEME OF COHESION AND PURPOSE. WITHIN THE STRUCTURE OF DISCUSSION OF MINISTERIAL GUIDANCE, WE SHOULD CONTINUE TO 1) STRIVE FOR SOME FORM OF PUBLIC DISSEMINATION OF THE LONG-RANGE DEFENSE CONCEPT; 2) PUSH FOR SELECTIVE IMPROVEMENT OF CURRENT FORCES WITH SOME PRIORITY TO IMPROVEMENT OF CONVENTIONAL FORCES (A DISCUSSION OF THE NUNN SUPPORT-TO-COMBAT CONVERSIONS MAY BE APPROPRIATE HERE); 3) EMPHASIZE COOPERATIVE EFFORTS IN RATIONALIZATION WHILE PINPOINTING CONCRETE AREAS WHERE PROGRESS SHOULD BE BETTER (E.G. FLEXIBILITY, INTER-OPERABILITY AS A QTE FIRST STEP UNQTE IN STANDARDIZATION, ETC). WE MAY WISH TO WEAVE IN HERE CONTINUED CONSULTATIONS ON PLANS AND MUTUAL ACTIONS RELATED TO THE NUNN STANDARDIZATION AMENDMENT.

4. YOU SHOULD PRESS STRONGLY FOR BEGINNING THE TWO DAY MEETING WITH A RESTRICTED SESSION WHERE MINISTERS CAN TALK FREELY. WE SEE THE RESTRICTED SESSION AS INCLUDING THE QUESTION OF NATO PRESENCE IN THE MEDITERRANEAN (I.E. US DOING WHAT IT CAN; CAN OTHERS DO MORE?), OR BROADER QUESTION OF STRATEGIC SITUATION ON THE NORTHERN RIM OF THE MED. BEGIN FYI: WE DO NOT AT MOMENT WISH TO PUSH FOR COMPLETION OF SEPARATE REPORT ON STRATEGIC SITUATION IN THE SOUTHERN REGION. IT MIGHT BE CONFIDENTIAL

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BEST, HOWEVER, IF THIS REPORT COMES UP AT ALL, TO DISCUSS IT IN THE RESTRICTED SESSION RATHER THAN IN CONTEXT OF SEPARATE AGENDA ITEM OR AD-70 SPRING REPORT. END FYI. WE ALSO EXPECT TO DISCUSS THE SPANISH-NATO RELATIONSHIP. WE CAN CONTINUE PREVIOUS RESTRICTED DISCUSSIONS ON THE ROLE OF THEATER NUCLEAR WEAPONS, ESPECIALLY IF THE NUNN REPORT HAS RAISED QUESTIONS OR COMMENTS. WE SHOULD ALSO BE PREPARED TO DISCUSS PROGRESS IN MBFR.

THE THEATER NUCLEAR ISSUE COULD TRIGGER A MORE GENERALIZED DISCUSSION OF NATO STRATEGY. WE HOPE THAT THE FRG AND OTHERS CAN PARTICIPATE STRONGLY IN THE RESTRICTED DISCUSSIONS, PERHAPS SPONSORING EXCHANGE OF IDEAS ON ECONOMIC MATTERS RELATING TO NATO DEFENSE (I.E. KEEPING UP DEFENSE SPENDING). WE NEED MISSION THOUGHTS ON WHAT OTHER MINISTERS MAY RAISE FOR DISCUSSION AS WELL AS COMMENTS ON SUBJECTS CONSIDERED APPROPRIATE FOR SECDEF.

5. AS FAR AS THE OPEN AGENDA IS CONCERNED, WE EXPECT THAT LUNS WILL WANT TO INCLUDE, AND WE WOULD SUPPORT: THE EUROGROUP REPORT, POSSIBLY AN INTELLIGENCE BRIEFING, A STATEMENT BY THE CHAIRMAN OF THE MILITARY COMMITTEE,

MINISTERIAL GUIDANCE, THE SPRING AD-70 REVIEW, RATIONALIZATION, STANDARDIZATION, FLEXIBILITY AND THE USUAL ANY OTHER BUSINESS AND COMMUNIQUE.

6. WE HOPE MISSION CAN CONCERT WITH INTERNATIONAL STAFF AS EARLY AS POSSIBLE AND PROVIDE WASHINGTON WITH VIEWS AND A RECOMMENDED SCENARIO WHICH WILL PROVIDE AS MUCH SUBSTANCE AS POSSIBLE FOR THE DEFMIN MEETING.

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Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
Capture Date: 01 JAN 1994
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: MEETING AGENDA, MINISTERIAL MEETINGS
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 18 APR 1975
Decaption Date: 01 JAN 1960
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Authority: GarlanWA
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 28 MAY 2004
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1975STATE089951
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: CVMCLAUGHLIN:MEM
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: GS
Errors: N/A
Film Number: D750138-0211
From: STATE
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1975/newtext/t19750436/aaaabhpv.tel
Line Count: 139
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE, ON MICROFILM
Office: ORIGIN EUR
Original Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Original Handling Restrictions: n/a
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 3
Previous Channel Indicators: n/a
Previous Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Reference: n/a
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Authority: GarlanWA
Review Comment: n/a
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 18 APR 2003
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review History: RELEASED <18 APR 2003 by BoyleJA>; APPROVED <18 APR 2003 by GarlanWA>
Review Markings:

Margaret P. Grafeld
Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
05 JUL 2006

Review Media Identifier:
Review Referrals: n/a
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: PRING DPC MINISTERIAL MEETING
TAGS: MPOL, NATO
To: NATO BRUSSELS
Type: TE
Markings: Margaret P. Grafeld Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 05 JUL 2006